NONPROFIT ORGANISATIONS AND PUBLIC POLICY:

EXPLORING THE RESEARCH ROLE OF THE BROTHERHOOD OF ST LAURENCE

WORKING PAPER NO 67

Susan Keen

QUT

The Program on Nonprofit Corporations is a research unit at the Queensland University of Technology. It seeks to promote research from many disciplines into the nonprofit sector.

The Program on Nonprofit Corporation reproduces and distributes these working papers from authors who are affiliated with the Program or who present papers at Program seminars. They are not edited or reviewed, and the views in them are those of their authors.

A list of all the Program's publications and working papers is available from the address below.

Queensland University of Technology September 1996
Published by Program on Nonprofit Corporations
Queensland University of Technology
GPO Box 2434
BRISBANE QLD 4001
Phone: (07) 3864 1268
Fax: (07) 3864 1812
ISBN 1 86435 121 7
ISSN 1037-1516

NONPROFIT ORGANISATIONS AND PUBLIC POLICY: EXPLORING THE RESEARCH ROLE OF THE BROTHERHOOD OF ST LAURENCE

Susan Keen
School of Social Science and Policy
University of New South Wales

This paper begins to explore the role of the Brotherhood of St Laurence as a nonprofit welfare organisation and its influence on public policy in Australia. The Brotherhood's impact on Australian social policy has been evident through a range of actions: the production of research on relevant social issues; the preparation of submissions and position papers and involvement in consultations with governments on social policy; and the personal influence of many of the charismatic (mostly) men who have led the organisation throughout its history. This paper highlights the Brotherhood's research aspect and speculates upon the impact of its considerable research contribution. The Brotherhood has been involved in service delivery through a range of often innovative programs throughout its history, but the organisation's involvement in research and advocacy has rendered it unique in comparison to any other nonprofit welfare organisation in Australia. This paper finds that different kinds of research can be utilised in different ways; by studying the output of the Brotherhood it will explore and highlight how knowledge utilisation takes place.

The Brotherhood of St Laurence

Melbourne's Brotherhood of St Laurence was founded by Gerard Tucker in Fitzroy (Victoria) in 1933. From the outset of Tucker's arrival in Melbourne at the tail end of the Great Depression, he was involved in activities which would tackle the social effects of the economic difficulties faced by many in this era. Tucker planned a religious order but found it difficult to keep members for long periods of time, requiring vows of chastity and frugality of his followers. By the early post-war period there were no members of the religious order with the exception of Tucker himself and the Brotherhood evolved into a welfare organisation. The Brotherhood has maintained its close relationship with the Anglican church.

An early project to which he turned his attention was a hostel for unemployed men - the House of St Francis Hostel which opened late in 1933. He also established a settlement for unemployed families at Carrum Downs in 1935 (to become a residential settlement for aged persons in the post-war period); and opened a hostel for homeless boys in 1937. He was

concerned for Melbourne's slum-dwellers and began an immediate campaign for the eradication of slum accommodation. He created a new letterhead for the Brotherhood of St Laurence in 1935 which announced 'The Brotherhood of St Laurence has Declared War on the Slums' drawing some stark facts from the 1933 census announcing that:

> 'Fitzroy has the highest infantile death rate (79.33 per thousand) and Camberwell has the lowest (34.68 per thousand) - Is it Fair?' (Handfield, 1980:101).

Tucker continually sought ways for the Brotherhood of St Laurence to become involved in activities which would change the lives of the people for whom his pastoral care extended. To achieve this aim, he encouraged individuals to become voluntarily involved in the causes he identified. He did not seek, in the early stage, to directly affect government policies. He soon found, however, that it was difficult to achieve the kinds of change needed on the scale required to resolve the many social problems which existed. However, despite his efforts to get people involved in the slum effort by calling for donations and encouraging voluntarism on projects such as Carrum Downs, one of the failures of the voluntary sector noted by Salamon (1987) was evident - that of philanthropic insufficiency:

> ...he believed that people should help each other and he saw it as a function of the Church to organise this...it seemed outrageous that the Church had allowed slums to grow up, unchecked, in the first place, but infinitely worse that it was now doing nothing towards their eradication. He really believed that if Australians, as a nation, could be converted to his active Christianity all the problems besetting the community would be solved, because everyone would then live in harmony with the will of God.....Eventually he came to believe that the total eradication of slums had to involve government too because, as he put it, he could organise assistance only for 'tens' when it was needed by 'hundreds' - and the task was too big for a non-government organisation (Handfield, 1980:102).

Early recognition of the inability of voluntarism to deal with massive social problems led to activism alongside the provision of various services, particularly relating to accommodation difficulties. When the Landlord and Tenant Regulations introduced as a wartime measure produced some anomalies, Tucker and his two colleagues, Coaldrake and Bishop, became involved in such incidents as attempting to resist the eviction of a sub-tenant from one property in Fitzroy and to facilitate the eviction of another sub-tenant at a property in Armadale. Known as the 'verandah sitting incident', this latter involved Tucker, Coaldrake and Bishop camping on the verandah of the Armadale house for just over five weeks until they were able to reinstall the owner of the house, an elderly widow

(Carter, 1967).

Tucker's decision to pursue government support for his projects was hampered by the nature of policy and politics and the difficulty of keeping social problems on the agenda of policy makers. Tucker soon found that campaigns for social action could lead to promises being extracted from politicians. However, Tucker and his colleagues would find themselves waiting years for the fruition of those promises, only to find that they would eventually not be fulfilled at all:

> There have been many promises made during those years since 1933, and there have been many promises broken.....On many occasions the Press and the public have rallied to our call for immediate action. On every occasion the technique on the part of the Government has been the same. The wind has been taken out of our sails by solemn promises that immediate action would be taken. Elaborate plans have been published, photographs have appeared in the Press of the Premier of the day inspecting slum hovels, and the same Premier, while expressing his horror of the dilapidated buildings seen, has pledged himself to do something about the matter. Those who had rallied to our cause would thus think the battle had been won: but that was just what the Government wanted the public to think, and nothing was done (Tucker, 1954:124)

Perhaps it is not surprising, then, that Tucker turned to social research and the systematic collection of evidence. Research at least provided a record which could be re-utilised. It was the realisation by Tucker that empirical evidence was important, that knowledge was a path to power, that has given the Brotherhood of St Laurence its special credibility. The years of research and subsequent publication has imbued the Brotherhood with a framework of considerable expertise which has been utilised by government in the sphere of social policy in a range of ways.

Those who recognise the importance of the organisational founder to organisational culture will recognise that the pattern established by Tucker has been maintained throughout the existence of the Brotherhood. A succession of committed poverty activists have provided the organisation with their direction, and a stream of committed social researchers have produced a range of research and policy documents from which innovative changes have been promoted or produced.

Nonprofit Organisations, Public Policy, and Research

Not too long ago, Boards of Directors of many nonprofit organisations would have been hard to persuade to include a research and policy section within their organisation. The argument for and against a research division usually divides along the lines of either a positive attitude to knowledge production and its uses, versus a consideration that research information is a luxury, the expense of which would be better utilised for service delivery. The argument is usually framed by asking: why take away resources for service delivery which could help the agency's clients and place that money into a function which may have little direct or obvious benefit? Yet in recent years there has been increasing recognition of the value of information. Although not the least of reasons, the need to have evidence for accountability purposes (whether to Boards, governments or annual reports) has heightened the necessity for the collection of systematic data of various kinds.

In general it can be said that nonprofit organisations may have a significant impact on public policy - at least in a receptive political climate. They are sources of considerable expertise about social conditions, can advocate on behalf of their constituents, and through documenting the range of experiences and needs evident in the immediate climate, can provide a barometer for social needs. Systematically collected evidence which recognises the difficulties faced by nonprofit organisations can be utilised as a reminder to policymakers that despite the provision of pensions and other benefits there are many who still need to turn to the nonprofit sector for benefits, clothing or other assistance. Nonprofit organisations, through their welfare arms, are able to identify which groups in society are most in need - eg the aged in the 1950s, widows in the 1960s, single parents in the 1970s, and more recently, the single income family on a low wage unable to meet the cost of basic living standards - important information for policymakers.

The success of the formula used by Melbourne’s Brotherhood of St Laurence is envied by many Sydney-based nonprofit welfare organisations which have, in recent years, taken more interest in research and policy matters. A small survey conducted of the major Sydney welfare nonprofits showed that they were either considering employing research staff, or had done so in the recent past. The reasons cited for the need for research positions included: a desire to monitor government policy and be ready to provide submissions on policy areas when appropriate; preparation of needs-based submissions to attract funding; concern that innovative programs within agencies were not being recorded or discussed in the professional arena; the need to evaluate programs for efficiency and

effectiveness (both internal and external); raising the profile of the organisation through media release of research findings; and admiration for the work of the Brotherhood and a desire to emulate that research focus in some way within their own organisation (Keen, 1993:32-33). Thus 'research' in a range of forms is gaining greater credibility. Recent reports on aspects of poverty by nonprofits based in the NSW highlight this new interest (Wesley Mission, 1996; Smith Family, 1996).

Does research work? What purpose does it serve? Who uses it and why?

Bulmer identified five kinds of research with which to categorise the research conducted by social scientists. The first of these was basic research, primarily concerned with advancing knowledge for its own sake either through theory-building and testing, or for the satisfaction of curiosity. The second category identified was strategic research which was research oriented towards a particular problem or policy area in society which did not, however, necessarily prescribe solutions to those problems. The third category was specific problem-oriented research which was research carried out for a client such as a government department (Bulmer, 1978:8-9). This is also often referred to as applied research. The fourth category was action research where the research was conducted as part of a planned program of social change. And lastly, Bulmer identified the category of intelligence and monitoring, which includes the collection of demographic, economic and social statistics which can be drawn upon by government to assist in the formulation of policy (Bulmer, 1978:9).

Bulmer stresses that the boundaries between the five categories cannot be considered to be clear-cut, and that the kind of classification suggested above should be thought of as a continuum (1978:9). However, it provides a more useful mechanism for understanding the role of the various kinds of information produced by each category than the oversimplified yet frequently used classification of basic v. applied research. These categories or classifications will be utilised in relation to research produced by the Brotherhood and combined with evidence about the way this knowledge is utilised. An attempt will be made to evaluate the benefits of the research produced: some immediate and obvious and others cumulative, slower, but equally effective.

How, then, is knowledge utilised? Weiss considers that knowledge utilisation in policy is an 'extraordinarily complicated phenomenon'. A number of models of research utilisation have been suggested. The idea of using social research in policy is often viewed as involving a direct application in a linear direction. Two such models are offered: first, the 'knowledge-driven model' suggests that knowledge is first produced, later leading to new applications and new policies; second, the 'problem solving model' or 'decision-driven model' suggests that a problem exists, research knowledge is sought to provide understanding for a solution, or range of solutions from which to select, and a solution is reached (Weiss, 1986). One of the major criticisms of these two models is that they imply that knowledge utilisation is a neat, linear process - a misleading view of the actual process which is much less organised or observable.

Another model suggested is an 'interactive' model, where research is 'part of an interactive search for knowledge' for decision-making purposes:

> Those engaged in developing policy seek information not only from social scientists but from a variety of sources - administrators, practitioners, politicians, planners, journalists, clients, interest groups, aides, friends, and social scientists, too. The process is not one of linear order from research to decision but a disorderly set of inter-connections and back-and-forthness that defies neat diagrams (Weiss, 1986:35).

Or research can be part of a 'political' model where it is used as ammunition by one side of the political arena against the other. While this might be seen as misuse by some social scientists, Weiss points out that it is still 'use', and that only if or when research results are distorted or misinterpreted to suit a political position does this sphere of utilisation become illegitimate (1986:36). Another model mentioned by Weiss is research as 'tactical' model, where decision-makers will suggest that research is currently underway as a means of deflecting criticism (1986:37). Finally, however, Weiss suggests that the most likely way for social science knowledge to enter the policy world is through a process known as 'enlightenment', where:

> The imagery is that of social science generalizations and orientations percolating through informed publics and coming to shape the way in which people think about social issues. Social science research diffuses circuitously through manifold channels - professional journals, the mass media, conversations with colleagues... (Weiss, 1986:38).

While this is a far from satisfactory model for those who would wish to see immediate results from their research efforts, it does appear that this is the most likely means by which

social science knowledge enters the policy realm. When an issue is receiving research attention such as the plight of the poor in the 1950s and 1960s, it takes the gradual and persistent efforts of knowledge making its way into the media, the parliamentary sphere, and into public discussion, to build a crescendo which will ultimately lead to credibility and legitimacy for a political response to the issue, when politicians, armed with justifications potentially drawn from social science knowledge, can make a case for change to a policy area.

Curiosity driven research or advocacy research - is there a difference?

There is no doubt that research questions are framed in terms of the research organisation's particular value orientation towards the problem. Should this cause concern, or are there constraints operating upon researchers which, given that the value dimension is unavoidable, still provide the capability of providing objective analysis of the problem at hand? Topics for research are selected on the basis of their relevance - for example - early empirical studies by the Brotherhood included surveys of low-income families - a topic particularly relevant to the service role of the organisation. The Brotherhood might have framed such a study from a curiosity or strategic research direction, but the research was framed in the light of existing knowledge available to Brotherhood workers on the conditions of low-income families. While this holds no particular dilemma for research in the current era, it might have been seen to be value-laden and the researchers too closely enmeshed in the social problem in the 1960s when researchers till claimed that objectivity was achievable and distance from the 'researched' sacrosanct.

Despite the long-term nature of social science debates concerning objectivity and values, there are a number of constraints on researchers which ensure credibility. Policy researchers have certain motivations to conduct research which offers sensible conclusions. As Jamrozik (1991) argues:

> ...the closer a researcher's association with an agency, political party or government department, the more difficult it is for the researcher to maintain his or her autonomy. Yet, that autonomy is important if research in social policy and social welfare (and by implication the social sciences as a whole) are to play their social role with integrity (Jamrozik, 1991:310).

Further, Weiss considers that there are four basic motivations for policy researchers,

whether they are located in government or non-government organisations, profit or nonprofit. The first is to be reputable social scientists, achieved through the quality of their conceptual and methodological research. The second is the desire to have an impact, to make a difference, to have their work utilised. Thirdly, they want to contribute to the rationality of the policy process by providing information which can enhance the decision-making capacity of policymakers. Lastly, they want to conduct research that advances their position on an issue, ie. to provide a basis for advocacy of a political position or perspective (1991:45-6). Attempts to ensure objectivity (ie through validity and reliability of research) are maintained and an advocacy position added, recommending a policy solution of some kind.

The Brotherhood's research history

The Brotherhood's history of support for research goes back to the 1940s, such an unusual pastime for a voluntary organisation as to render this remarkable. In 1943 the Church of England Men's Society (CEMS) asked Tucker to suggest an activity which they could sponsor. Tucker recommended they support research on some of the social problems which would have to be tackled once the war ended. John Reeves, a member of the Students' Christian Movement, and a recent graduate, BA (Econ) of the University of Melbourne was appointed as 'social research officer'. Reeves (1944; 1944a) aimed to supply 'first-hand information, supported by clearly stated facts and statistics, as to community evils, injustices and weaknesses' such as: the problem tenant of housing schemes; juvenile delinquency; children's welfare; prostitution; old age pensioners; the liquor problem; religion in education; relation of church and state; and unemployment.

Reeves' first task was to provide recommendations on housing for 'problem' tenants, which became the report *Housing the Forgotten Tenth* (1944). This report recommended the purchase and repair of blocks of housing in slum areas, with social workers encouraging problem families to improve their standards of housekeeping and family life so that they would subsequently qualify for Housing Commission homes (Handfield, 1980:154). The CEMS, in a foreword to the first publication produced by John Reeves stated:

'Real knowledge is power, and...too often, the Church has been pushed aside in matters of social reform because of its lack of authentic firsthand information on social conditions' (Reeves, 1944:3).

The introduction to *'Housing the Forgotten Tenth'*, was written by F. Oswald Barnett, a long-time Melbourne social reformer, by this time Deputy Chairman of the Housing Commission of Victoria, where he stated:

> It is with relief and also with great faith that I express my unbounded approval of this latest venture of the Brotherhood of St Laurence to grapple with one of the most difficult and unspectacular problems of so changing the depraved family that it will become a suitable tenant of a Commission house. I am convinced it is the most logical attempt yet put forward to solve this difficult problem. I have faith that, though the way is long and arduous, it will eventually succeed. The Brotherhood is making history. It is lighting a fire that it is hoped will spread to every Church, a fire that is the only hope of redeeming that portion of Society that is down-and-out (Barnett, in Reeves, 1944:8).

Tucker was aware of the power of the media in influencing both the public and the government, broadcasting from radio 3DB and later 3XY, calling for donations and disseminating his messages to a wider forum than the Anglican community (Handfield, 1980:143). Publication of the Brotherhood of St Laurence's paper *Now* was a forum for heightening public awareness of the social problems about which Tucker was concerned. As he noted in his autobiography 'The paper is often referred to in the House, and one side uses what we say as a weapon against its opponents' (1954:150) - the ‘political’ model of information use. As Tucker suggested when Reeves was appointed:

> One of the reasons I want to retain Mr Reeves' services is that he can do much to remove ignorance...I would that all sections of the press did their part in dispelling that ignorance (Handfield, 1980:155).

With the lack of a flourishing social research culture in Australian universities at this time and the fledgling social work departments only just being incorporated into the universities in the war period, there was little in the way of a research role model to follow. However, Tucker did have the example of Barnett's research on the slum problem (eg Barnett, 1941), and also the work of Wilfrid Prest, an economist at the University of Melbourne who conducted surveys of living conditions in Melbourne between 1941-43 (Davison and Lack, 1981), as examples of the kinds of information that could be gathered utilising social research techniques.

Thus at the time the first research conducted by a nonprofit welfare agency was undertaken the actions of the Brotherhood and of Reeves and Tucker signalled a new faith in social

engineering - this piece of empirical research with its recommendations for ameliorating the problems of the 'difficult' families or tenants of commission homes (Reeves, 1944) could provide the resolution to social problems, filled with hope and faith for the future not only of the problem tenants but for social research and the discoveries it could promote. That this was an unusual action for an Australian welfare agency cannot be overstressed. To my knowledge, support for research by the establishment of an internal and ongoing research position in a voluntary organisation is unparalleled by any other agency for many years to follow.

In the post-war period the research and publications continued. There is not space here to consider each of the major surveys conducted and their impact, however analysis of the Commonwealth parliamentary debates shows that the surveys conducted by the Brotherhood were frequently used by the opposition as ammunition for policy argument on the plight of various groups in Australian society (CPDHR, 1950-1975). Research by Mozer (1955), a survey of large family, low income groups in Housing Commission homes; the Brotherhood of St Laurence (1958), a pamphlet *100,000 Depressed Pensioners: How £7 million will ease their plight'* based on Downing's work, the figure of 100,000 drawn from his study (Downing, 1957); Martin's (1964) *High Rents and Low Incomes;* O'Neill and Paterson's (1968) *The Cost of Free Education;* O'Neill and Nairn's (1972) *The Have Nots: How 56 Low Income Families Live;* and other Brotherhood publications were frequently used as part of policy debate. In the years leading to the Poverty Inquiry and towards the end of the long period of conservative government, the opposition became adept at seizing publications which provided the kind of evidence they could utilise to demand government action.

When one examines the use of these publications within the Commonwealth parliamentary debates, it is almost possible to argue that this is an example of knowledge-driven research. However, Weiss argues that knowledge rarely leads directly to implementation:

> Perhaps most important, unless a social condition has been consensually defined as a pressing social problem, and unless the condition has become fully politicized and debated, and the parameters of potential action agreed upon, there is little likelihood that policy-making bodies will be receptive to the results of social science research (Weiss, 1986:32).

The above quote highlights the importance of the cumulative effect of 'enlightenment' as

described by Weiss. The knowledge produced allows the social problem to be defined and debated in the public sphere, in this case politicised by the party in opposition trying to discredit the policy record of the incumbent government.

The FCP in the 1970s - Linking research, practice and policy

The research and publications which accompanied the Family Centre Project of the early 1970s signalled a different approach to research. The previous studies were largely based on survey techniques, although they combined both qualitative and quantitative data. The Family Centre Project differed in that it was 'action research' or part of a planned program of social change. This experimental project attracted a great deal of attention from social policy analysts. The Foreword to Liffman's (1978) *Power for the Poor* was written by David Donnison of the London School of Economics where he stated:

> Social workers in Britain have long needed centres in which it would be possible to do social work and develop new working aims and methods, to conduct and publish research, to train students, and to pursue social action aimed at central and local government and the public opinion to which governments are accountable.....The Brotherhood of St Laurence in Melbourne provides a centre for these four activities which has had a profound influence in Australia, and not only on social work. Ideas generated in the Brotherhood and people who have worked for this remarkable agency constantly turn up in the more important studies in poverty, in debate and action about town planning and housing, and in other fields (Donnison, in Liffman, 1978:9).

Not only did the Family Centre Project signal a new kind of research, it shifted the focus, in line with the theoretical mode of the period, from the individual as the centre of a problem and of casework as a method of dealing with the problem, to a new focus on structural issues in society as being the main source of poverty and thus the locus of mediation. The centrepiece of the Family Centre Project was an income supplement scheme which clearly demonstrated that income was a prerequisite for the stabilisation of other problems which affected the poor (see Liffman, 1978; Benn, 1981 for a full discussion of this project).

One of the theoretical precepts which guided social work and social administration in the 1960s was the consideration that there existed a 'culture of poverty' among poor families. This view focused the problems of poverty on individual families rather than upon problems with the structure of society. In discussing the Brotherhood's innovative Family Centre Project, Benn states:

It was not long before the workers became aware that searching for a 'culture of poverty' not only located the causes of poverty in the personalities of the poor, but also prohibited a more radical approach to poverty. As the families' circumstances and lives became known to the workers, the idea of a 'culture of poverty' was rejected, and they began to work on the assumption that the causes of poverty were located in the institutional structure of society (Benn, 1981:81).

This quite dramatic change in perception of the location of the root cause of the problem (that it existed within the society rather than as the fault of the poor family) was reached through the combination of practice (service delivery demonstrating that casework was not having any long-term effects on changing life chances), and the action research which was part of the Family Centre Project, thus demonstrating a clear link between research and practice.

Another idea under radical challenge was the idea of the participation of clients in decisions about their own welfare involving an understanding of the nature of power and its role in peoples' lives. These ideas first found their locus in the American War on Poverty programs and were translated to Australia in a range of ways. Probably their most hopeful manifestation was within the planned Australian Assistance Plan. Benn points out that the concept of power was a new one for social work in this period in the early 1970s, but became a central component of the Family Centre Project. Four tenets of power were identified: power over resources, power over relationships, power over information and power over decision making (1981:82). Thus an idea stemming from American research was translated into the policy and practice of the Brotherhood's Family Centre Project from its inception.

Looking at this project from an historical perspective, it seems a perfect example of the integration of research, policy and practice. A practice problem (the inadequacies of case work for the families concerned) led to a new policy in the Brotherhood to tackle the problem from a different perspective. This project was documented (particularly by Benn, 1981 and Liffman, 1978) as part of ongoing research, or action research, into its operation and subsequent evaluation. Yet, within the project the same problems of integrating research and practice were evident. Benn notes that the service workers were reluctant to become involved in the research side of the project, preferring to concentrate on work with the families (1981:85-89). The very problem which would become the focus of future publications such as Schön's (1983) *The Reflective Practitioner*, was patently obvious to Benn: 'Exhausted and worn out practitioners do not develop habits of

reading, reflection, and incorporation of knowledge' (1981:86).

The 1980s - the Child Poverty Action Campaign

In the 1980s, the Child Poverty campaign stands out, and provides an interesting case study of the transformation from the Family Centre Project which embodied a close interconnection of research, policy and practice, to a quite different approach to knowledge utilisation. This was not a campaign based on research which the Brotherhood had itself undertaken, but something entirely different - the taking up of statistics produced by the government which showed that the number of children living in poverty had increased. This was followed by a concerted campaign spearheaded by (the then) Canon Peter Hollingworth, as Executive Director of the Brotherhood. In an 'open letter to Hawke on behalf of Australia's poor' appearing on the front page of Melbourne's Age newspaper, Hollingworth suggested that practically every human problem had been brought down to an economic argument 'reflected in a never-ending cycle of depressing statistics':

> We get all those statistics. We know them well, but we also know what they really mean. Sometimes, even we are shocked. The other day, for instance, we got an 11-page yellow document from the Social Security Department. It was called "Social Security Pensioners and Beneficiaries as a proportion of the population and the labor force: Australia 1973-1983" (Hollingworth, 1984).

Hollingworth pointed out that the number of children living in poverty, according to the government's own statistics, had risen steadily to 18.2% of the population in 1982. In an address to The Children's Bureau of Australia Inc. in November 1985, Bishop Hollingworth stated that '...it came as a shock to me to see in black and white the figures living in poor families had quadrupled between 1973 and 1983 to the point where nearly one in five children in Australia is being raised in poverty. That amounts to more than 800,000 children', stated Hollingworth, 'an awful figure which ought to shock the most hardened politician or economic analyst into action' (1985:17). Whether as a direct result, or as a result of the public discussion ensuing from the campaign, Hawke's infamous pledge that by 1990 'no child will (subsequently need) live in poverty' could be attributed to the campaign begun by the Brotherhood - based on the government's own data. As Hollingworth stated, 'It (the campaign) began a new episode for the Brotherhood' (1985:17). This campaign did signal a change towards study of broad national issues which have become a focus for Brotherhood research expertise.

Briefly - the 1990s

There is an interesting juxtaposition in some of the Brotherhood's current work. At one level, there is the expertise and past research into structural issues, particularly the role of taxation in redistribution and the provision of equity in society (see particularly, publications by Alison McClelland). This kind of knowledge is focused at the national level on broad structural issues which are entirely relevant to the future of welfare in Australia. At the other end of the scale is the Life Chances project, which aims to study approximately 160 children through their lives to understand the effects of low or high income on their life chances. This is a longitudinal study, the kind of qualitative research which is terribly important to an understanding of social conditions, but rarely conducted by academics or strategic research centres. It involves periodical interviews with the families of the children who were born in 1990. Both of these areas are vital areas of research for future policy.

Knowledge, expertise and organisational authority

Examining the *Bibliography of Brotherhood of St Laurence Publications and Papers 1933-1991* (Brotherhood of St Laurence, 1993) shows a new emphasis on policy papers - arguing positions on various issues, but perhaps less of the original research which was the hallmark of the Brotherhood of St Laurence's early years. The following graph demonstrates the considerable increase in publications emanating from the Brotherhood in the last two decades: